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Asiatic people, depends on the success of their first charge; but a single Congreve-rocket is sufficient to put the whole army to flight" (p. 35). Such being the character of the force of a leading state of Independent Tartary, it can scarcely be expected to resist with success the advance of Russian domination into that region, which has long been steady and progressive.

12. *Die Erdkunde von Asien von Carl Ritter*. Vol. IX. Part I. Asia Minor. Berlin, 1858.

THE sixth division of the third book (Western Asia) of the eighteenth part of Ritter's copious Geography of Asia—a tome consisting of 1024 closely-printed pages—is appropriated to Asia Minor; but even this abundance of letterpress does not exhaust the subject in the hands of the Prussian geographer, since the work before us constitutes only the first of three volumes, the rest of which are to follow. It treats of little more than the northern shores and declivity of the peninsula of Asia Minor, after a general description of the central table-land, and of its great streams, the Tchoruk, Yezil Irmak (Iris), Kizil Irmak (Halys), Sakaria (Sangarias), the river of Trebizond, &c.; and its twenty-third and last chapter is devoted to a consideration of the chief towns and trade of the southern coast of the Black Sea. In addition to full descriptions of the physical geography and commercial resources of this region, the archæology of the northern part of Asia Minor receives its full share of notice in accounts of the troglodytic caves and sculptures on the south bank of the Halys and elsewhere, the ruins of Boghaz, those of the ancient Pessinus (Bala Hissar) with the temple of Cybele, the Greek colony of the ancient Trapezus (Trebizond), &c.; and digressions are introduced on the Angora wool and goats' hair, the culture of saffron around Zafaran-boly, and the tunny fishery of Sinope. At the end are an appendix from the pen of Kiepert, and engravings of Assyrian monuments in Asia Minor with explanatory notes. The work is continued after the same plan which has characterised it throughout; and it is not too much to say that when terminated it will be a complete encyclopædia of all that is known concerning the great continent that has been the storehouse of all the nations which have peopled the earth.

13. *Vespuce et son Premier Voyage*. Par M. F. A. de VARNHAGEN, Memb. de la Société de Géographie. Paris: Martinet, 1858.

THE author remarks that since the publication of the illustrious Humboldt's *Examen Critique de l'Histoire Géographique du Nouveau Continent*, the consideration due to Amerigo Vespucci has been restored to his memory. His claims to the applause of posterity rest upon four recorded voyages—two made in the service of Portugal, and the other two (which were previous) in that of Spain; but the first of the latter named has been frequently regarded as apocryphal. The author is, however, convinced of its certainty. He says it cannot be doubted "that Vespucci left Spain on the 10th of May, 1497; and having sailed a thousand leagues west-south-west, passing consequently across the Antilles, found himself after 37 days in lat. 16° N., and long. 75° W., of the Canaries. He then discovered the new continent some days before Cabot. He had attained the Bay of Honduras. . . . Thence he followed, in sight of land, the coast of Yucatan, towards the north-east, for two days, and at length, on discovering a safe anchorage for vessels, cast anchor half a league from land. He disembarked 40 men, who made some barter with the natives,

He continued to sail for some days, frequently landing, and at length arrived at a port, in the midst of which was seen an assemblage of houses built in the water, and defended with drawbridges. According to the relation of Vespucci, this port was 80 leagues south of that where the fleet subsequently arrived, and which was placed under the Tropic of Cancer. We are inclined to think that this port with its dwellings built in the water was no other than Vera Cruz, with the Isle of Sacrifices, and that which Erijalva called San Juan de Ulua, and of which Herrera gives an idea in no wise contradicting the impression that Vespucci had received in likening it to Venice. Thence he sailed to another port 80 leagues distant, well watered, abounding in fish and in birds, amongst which Vespucci mentions parroquets. This port was situated in a country which, according to the Italian text by Bandini and Canovai, is designated by the name of Lariab."

This Lariab, M. Varnhagen contends, is *Caria* or *Cariah*, disfigured by the transcriber, and is the port of Tampico. From this point, he says, Vespucci proceeded northward, "coasting along an extent estimated at 870 leagues. By a comparison of his narrative with other documents, it would appear that he well recognised the Mississippi, and that he pursued his course to Florida, the southern extremity of which peninsula he reached towards the end of April, 1498. From this point he must have passed through the Bahama channel, and continued to coast along the shores of the United States for more than thirty days, until after a navigation of thirteen months, consequently in the month of June, we find him not far from the port called by Vespucci the best in the world. This port could be nowhere except in the Gulf of St. Lawrence. After thirty-seven days it was decided to leave it; but the natives having a feud with certain others who inhabited an island a hundred leagues distant, the navigators considered themselves obliged to take part with the former in return for the treatment they had received. After a sail of seven days east-north-east they arrived at an island named Iti. They took some prisoners there, a part of whom were given over to the natives of the Gulf, who returned to their own country. Notwithstanding the resemblance of the names, we must be careful not to confound, as has been done, this isle of Iti, surrounded by other islands, inhabited or desert, with that of Haiti or Hispaniola. This expedition did not return to Cadiz until the month of October, 1498, after a voyage of eighteen months."

The author cites various proofs in favour of the authenticity of the first voyage of Vespucci; he afterwards directs his attention to overthrow objections made against it; and he quotes an important document in support of his positions, in the shape of a letter, dated in 1506, which was discovered by Ranke at Vienna, and published by Humboldt at p. 157 of the fifth volume of his *Examen Critique*. In addition, he affords us at the end of his pamphlet facsimiles of three notes attributed to Columbus, and bearing closely on the subject. The ultimate conclusion to which M. Varnhagen arrives is, that Vespucci undoubtedly accompanied Pinzon and Solis, and with a fleet of four ships, between 1497 and August, 1498, discovered and explored all the eastern coast of North America from Yucatan and the Gulf of Mexico to the most northern parts of the United States.

14. *Notes on Ghilan*.* By KEITH E. ABBOTT, Esq., H.M. Consul, Tehran.

GHILAN is a narrow strip of country situated on the south-western side of the Caspian, and enclosed by a lofty range of mountains, measuring from 6000

* See Paper by General Monteith, vol. iii. Journal R.G.S.—ED.